

Research and innovation



PRIMA Info Day at the UfM Secretariat

Research and innovation are vital for inclusive human progress. Research offers policymakers scientific grounds for decisions based on data and hard facts. It **helps us to understand the world's problems**, and plays a key role in moving towards a sustainable future. Meanwhile, innovation helps bridge the gap between economic activities and respect for the environment, **unlocking the potential of sustainable growth**.

In view of its importance, the UfM enhances regional cooperation on research and innovation as a means of achieving its objectives of human and sustainable development, and as a way to push forward regional, scientific diplomacy.

root causes is therefore essential in providing balanced, coherent and long-term responses.

In that regard, the UfM Secretariat has supported the launch of a **Euro-Mediterranean Network of Research Institutes on Migration** (EuroMedMig), coordinated by the Interdisciplinary Research Group on Immigration at the Barcelona-based *Pompeu Fabra* University (UPF) in the framework of the 15th IMISCOE Annual Conference. Its core mission is to promote research, training, and knowledge transfer on the key challenges surrounding migration in the Mediterranean, and to facilitate collaboration among research institutions from 12 Euro-Mediterranean countries.

“The creation of this network will contribute to promoting a coordinated approach by the entire region to increase the mobility of researchers and students and to establish common platforms for the collection and analysis of data.”

Ricard Zapata-Barrero, *director of the Interdisciplinary Research Group on Immigration at the UPF (Spain)*



Understanding the deep roots of migration



Movement of people has always been at the core of the Mediterranean. Recently however, regional crises, such as conflicts, environmental conditions, demographic changes, and economic and political transitions, have led to **an increase in forced migration**. Understanding its



Migration has a strong agricultural and rural dimension, especially in a region particularly affected by environmental change. A large proportion of migrants originate from rural areas, characterised by growing rates of poverty and unemployment. Therefore, investment and research into sustainable agriculture and rural development, climate change adaptation and resilient livelihoods are crucial components of any plan to address challenges related to migration.

The UfM Secretariat participated in the development of a new **Mediterranean Platform for Dialogue on the Drivers of Rural Migration**, promoted by the CIHEAM in cooperation with the FAO and the European University Institute. The platform aims to encourage political dialogue and the sharing of best practices, and was launched during the Forum on Agriculture, Rural Development and Migration in the Mediterranean held at the FAO headquarters in Rome. It gave an overview of the challenges and opportunities associated with rural migration in the Mediterranean, as well as the main policies and strategies designed to harness the potential of agriculture and rural mobility.

EXPERTS' CORNER

The UfM Secretariat contributed to the bi-annual publication *MEDITERRA 2018*, jointly edited by AFD and CIHEAM, with the article [The Euro-Mediterranean Process and the Deep Roots of Migration](#).



Embracing the blue economy: a natural fit in the Mediterranean



The blue economy promotes sustainable exploitation of the sea through clean technologies and renewable energy. In an era where oceans are aggressively polluted and their resources drained, **the blue economy seeks to promote economic growth, environmental protection and social inclusion**, while preserving and improving livelihoods for current and future generations.

In this regard, the **BLUEMED Initiative** offers a framework for a shared research and innovation agenda towards a healthy, productive and resilient Mediterranean Sea. Supported by the European Commission since 2014, the initiative was opened up to non-EU Mediterranean countries on a voluntary basis with the help of the UfM Secretariat.

In 2018, the UfM Secretariat hosted **BLUEMED Week**, a three-day event aiming to promote research on the blue economy through regional cooperation. The

gathering allowed for the updating of the BLUEMED Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) on the basis of the resulting national inputs, to establish shared regional priorities and start developing a joint action plan.

Inviting the region's talent to take on food security and rural development

The UfM-labelled project **Higher Education on Food Security and Rural Development** harnesses the power of research and innovation as tools for rural development. The project targets CIHEAM students and alumni, developing their skills, research capabilities and awareness of career opportunities.

Within this, the UfM co-organised the **2nd Mediterranean Forum for PhD Students and Young Researchers** in Italy, together with CIHEAM, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Centre for Mediterranean Integration (CMI). The forum provided the opportunity to present success stories from the region's different countries to students and researchers, while strengthening dialogue and knowledge-sharing. For three days, participants from 27 countries had the opportunity to present their PhD theses, participate in dedicated training sessions, and exchange experiences on careers, employability and entrepreneurship.

ACCORDING TO A REGIONAL SURVEY, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DIFFICULTY IS IN COLLABORATING WITH FOREIGN SCIENTISTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN IS THE LACK OF COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMMES

Source: CIHEAM

ALSO ON THE AGENDA...

- Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA)
- Fisheries Science in the Mediterranean and Black Sea
- Widening Euro-Mediterranean participation in Horizon 2020

ufmsecretariat.org/what-we-do/

